



LtGen Jack Bergman

Commander, Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North

Marine Reserve Resets for Future, Serves Total Force Today

LtGen Jack Bergman was assigned to his current assignment in June 2005. An aviator, LtGen Bergman has flown CH-46 and UH-1 helicopters, T-28s and KC-130s. He served as chief of staff/deputy commander of I Marine Expeditionary Force Augmentation Command Element at Camp Pendleton, Calif.; deputy commander, Marine Forces Europe in Stuttgart, Germany; commander of II Marine Expeditionary Force Augmentation Command Element at Camp Lejeune, N.C.; commander of 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, New Orleans, La.; commander of the 4th Force Service Support Group, New Orleans; and chairman, Secretary of the Navy's Marine Corps Reserve Policy Board. LtGen Bergman serves on the Reserve Forces Policy Board, responsible for assisting the Department of Defense in establishing joint policy for all Reserve Components.

Marine Forces Reserve is poised to reset the force in the near term: requirements have been identified and resources have been secured. Marine Forces Reserve is not just focusing on what is needed now, but also upon future challenges of the Total Force and the modernization required to ensure that Marine Forces Reserve maintains its partnership within the Total Force.

Marine Corps Reserve units, Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Marines, and Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMAs) continue to fill critical requirements in our nation's defense and have deployed worldwide to countries in Southwest Asia as well as Northern Africa, supporting the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). At home, Marine Forces Reserve (MARFORRES) maintains Reserve Marines and assets pre-positioned throughout the country, to assist with national defense and civil-military missions, such as the disaster relief conducted last year after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The missions MARFORRES Marines and units have taken part in over the past five years have taught us that the individual Marine needs to know *how* to think, not *what* to think. Marines need to train so that they maximize their ability to adapt, regardless of the situation. The surest way to improve a Marine's knowledge is to advance the quality of his or her training. We have increased the use of simulators, such as the Virtual Combat Convoy Training simulator. Predeployment training also includes military operations in urban terrain as well as stability and support operations to help prepare for missions overseas. And we will continue to discover innovative training methods to enhance the capabilities of our Marines and Sailors.

Marine Corps Reserve units maintain a high level of premobilization readiness through a strong inspector-instructor system and a demanding Mobilization and Operational Readiness Deployment Test program.

We believe the Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR), with its force structure complementing the active operating force in its traditional "augment and reinforce" mission, continues to serve the nation well. Our Reserve Component is oriented toward that mission and doing its part in times of distress. However, we are conscious of how changes in key drivers—the new Quadrennial Defense Review, the Marine Corps' own Capabilities Assessment Group, recent operational employment patterns, and service expectations of the members of our Reserve—demand adjustments in Reserve missions and roles.



Platoon Commander Sean M. O'Neill, 28 of Sewickly, Pa., with 3/25, 1st platoon pauses to speak with a Marine during a night patrol for an operation in Haditha, Al Anbar, Iraq. (Photo by Cpl Ken Melton/USMC)

Total Force in Action

Reserve Marines understand the cost of protecting the American way of life, and, even though some have paid the ultimate price, they continue to volunteer to serve their countrymen. The Marine Reserve Force remains strong and constant because of the committed Marines in our ranks, our high retention and recruiting rates, and the ever-increasing benefits Reserve Marines and their families enjoy.

The Marine Corps adheres to a Total Force construct, which standardizes and integrates an Active Component of a little more than 175,000 Marines and a Reserve Component of approximately 40,000. Today's Marine Corps Reserve is comprised of more than 32,000 Marines in SMCR drilling units, more than 7,000 IMAs, and nearly 58,000 IRR Marines, which provide a pool of individual capabilities that can further augment the SMCR or Active Component.

Reserve Marines and units have contributed significantly to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) since Phase I. On the ground, missions provided to infantry battalions have increased significantly. Third Battalion, 24th Marines was the only Reserve infantry battalion to participate in OIF Phase II.1, primarily providing security for convoy operations and four bases. When the next iteration of troops rotated into Iraq, 1st Battalion, 23rd Marines was assigned to the important area around Hit and a lengthy stretch of a main service road. During that time, 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines was operating in the active Triangle of Death south of Baghdad.

During the next phase of OIF, 3rd Battalion, 25th Ma-

rines was responsible for the volatile Hit-Haditha Corridor, a deployment marked by significant operations and unwonted losses. Because of the strong performance of Reserve Marines in these difficult assignments, the next two rotations saw Reserve battalions take responsibility for Fallujah, which was still rebuilding after two major attacks in 2004. First Battalion, 25th Marines occupied Fallujah for most of 2006, followed by 1st Battalion, 24th Marines.

Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) units contributed extensively to the OIF and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron (HMH) 769 was the first 4th MAW unit activated in support of 3rd MAW. War preparations in support of I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and an eventual detachment to the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit were the culminating events of their first activation. HMH 772 was the first activated 4th MAW unit in support of 2nd MAW. Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 773 deployed in several rotations in support of OEF operations in Afghanistan. HMLA-775 rotated twice to Iraq in support of I and II MEF. Marine Fighter/Attack Squadron 142 provided F/A-18A+ Hornets during a deployment in support of II MEF. This was the first activation and deployment of a Reserve fighter squadron since Korea. HMLA-775, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 774, and HMM-764 made two deployments to Iraq during a two-year mobilization of their squadrons. Detachments from Marine Aerial Refuel and Transport Squadron (VMGR) 234 and VMGR-452 were mobilized for multiple rotations throughout the Iraq campaign.

In other contributions to OIF and OEF, Marine Reserve non-aircraft aviation units were activated in support of 2nd and 3rd MAW. Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 42 was the first activated MALS and supported 3rd MAW at Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., as MAG-39 deployed forward. All of 4th MAW Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) 471, MWSS-472, and MWSS-473, activated detachments and were involved in many rotations to Iraq, as were Marines from various maintenance, logistics, service support, and air controller units. All units within Marine Air Control Group 48 have been activated either in their traditional roles in the air command and control realm or in provisional roles such as rear area security. Fourth Marine Logistics Group (MLG) made several significant contributions with dozens of detachments deploying to Iraq to join larger combat service support units. Additionally, it trained and deployed Marines for the Personnel Retrieval Processing Unit, which worked with the remains and personal possessions of Ma-



Marines of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 769 pause for a photo with Afghan President Hamid Karzai aboard their CH-53E Super Stallion during a mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photo by Sgt Timothy Reed/USMC)

rines who died in Iraq, ensuring that Marines who made the ultimate sacrifice were treated with dignity on their final journey home.

In addition to ordering subordinate units to Iraq, MarForRes provided individual augmentees and civil affairs units that were vital to security and stability operations in Iraq. The civil affairs Marines worked on major projects, such as election support and infrastructure revitalization. They also conducted assessments of cities and regions and helped institute rehabilitation projects to repair damage and revitalize local economies.

Sustainment

Despite the high operational tempo, MarForRes continues to recruit and retain top-notch Marines. New Marines are consistently brought into the Reserves at a rate of 20 to 25 percent per year. This provides continued capability to augment and reinforce the Active Component.

An important source of Reserve Marines are those who transition from the Active to the Reserve Component. To keep this valuable pipeline open is the innovative commandant of the Marine Corps-directed Mobilization Deferral Program. Under this program—available to both enlisted Marines and officers—Marines transitioning to the Reserve Component are eligible for an involuntary mobilization deferral upon affiliation with an SMCR unit. To be eligible, the Marine must have completed a deployment in support of OEF or OIF in the 12 months prior to his or her end of active service (EAS). The deferral is good for 24 months from EAS. We believe that this program will alleviate the potential apprehension Marines might have about involuntary mobilization, thus providing a powerful incentive to “Stay Marine.”

Transformation

Since the GWOT, it has become necessary for the Marine Corps Reserve to increase the support required for operations. In 2004, the Marine Corps conducted an extensive Total Force Structure Review, which recommended structural changes to improve the Marine Corps Total Force’s ability to meet the long-term goals of the GWOT and the emerging requirements of the 21st century. This effort aimed to rebalance the Total Force with increases in capabilities for high-demand needs coming from military-to-civilian conversions and the dissolution or reorganization of units with capabilities in low demand.

One of the recommendations of the group was to assign a secondary civil-military operations mission to the Corps’ artillery regiments and battalions.

This illustrates the Corps’ overall effort to adapt techniques, tactics, and procedures to respond and succeed in irregular wars in urban environments against asymmetric enemies. For Marine Forces Reserve, this new mission for artillery units allows for even greater interoperability between force- and division-level units.

Our two standing civil affairs groups will each be responsible for supporting two artillery regiments. When this program reaches initial operational capability, we will have exponentially increased our ability to conduct civil-military operations across the battlefield, as well as giving the ground commander a ready pool of in-house civil-military warriors with which to accomplish his mission.

As new warfighting requirements have emerged, we have adapted our capabilities with an eye toward reinforcing these high-demand, low-density units in the Marine Corps Reserve. For example, the former 8th Tank Battalion, located in Rochester, N.Y., transitioned to become the core of a new antiterrorism battalion. Another example was the formation of an intelligence support battalion in Mobile, Ala., from existing structure to consolidate Reserve intelligence assets.

Most recently, changes under the Marine Aviation Transition Strategy have identified realignments within 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 134 in Miramar, Calif., will be deactivated, with the structure from that unit going to establish two Tactical Air Command Center (TACC) detachments, one for each coast. These TACC detachments will enhance the capabilities of the 2nd and 3rd Marine Aircraft Wings.

In a further nod toward transformation and realignment, both the I and II Marine Augmentation Command Elements deactivated. Their structure was realigned to IMA detachments which better support both I and II MEFs by giving them ownership of their individual augmentees.

In another example of transformation, the 4th MLG has led the way within the Total Force Marine Corps in

supporting the continuing development of the Marine Logistics Command (MLC) concept. The MLC is a tactical-level logistics capability that is organized along functional combat service support lines. At times, due to the expeditionary nature and quick deployment of forces into a theater, there may be an absence of operational logistic support at the theater level. When this occurs, the MLC as a task-organized force can provide the nucleus of an initial operational or theater level of logistics. Operational logistics links tactical requirements with strategic capabilities in order to accomplish operational objectives. The MLC is an early employment option available to the Marine Component commander if called upon to establish operational-level support during a major theater war. Once a joint theater/operational-level logistics capability is established, the MLC can serve as a bridge between it and the Marine Component commander and his supported units. Fourth MLG's leadership in development of the MLC concept is another example of how the Marine Corps Reserve is evolving from its traditional role of augmenting and reinforcing the Active Component to being a capabilities-based force that can quickly respond, deploy, and employ as part of any Marine Air Ground Task Force in the joint fight.

A noteworthy addition to the role of our Reserve Forces is the designation of the commander of Marine Forces Reserve as commander, Marine Forces North (COM-MARFORNORTH), which is the Marine Corps component responsible for supporting U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). Among the duties executed by COMMARFORNORTH and the MARFORNORTH staff are antiterrorism and force protection responsibilities for Marine Corps bases and installations. MARFORNORTH also commands, supports, coordinates with, and

provides advice on the employment of Marine Corps forces when attached to USNORTHCOM to conduct homeland defense operations and provide support to civilian authorities. The events of Hurricane Katrina highlighted the efforts of MARFORNORTH to integrate both Active and Reserve Marine Corps forces in the relief operations immediately following the storm.

This dual-hatting of commander and staff also serves to leverage one of the great strengths of the Reserve: its close contact with communities all across the United States. While informal in their nature, the ties that bind our Reserve Marines to their communities provide an invaluable perspective and sensitivity to the concerns of officials at the state and local level and pay great dividends in times of crisis response at home. By combining MARFORRES and MARFORNORTH duties in one commander and staff, we have achieved a reasonable balance in the efficient and effective use of headquarters personnel, while at the same time dramatically increasing the Marine Corps ability to support Northern Command.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps Reserve is a full partner of the Marine Corps Total Force Concept. Our Reserve Marines continue to prove their dedication to their country and fellow citizens. Their continuing honor, courage, and commitment to warfighting excellence while maintaining close ties to their community truly set them apart as Citizen Soldiers. They recognize they have a crucial mission, and the American people will continue to expect the most from them while continuing to support them. Marine Forces Reserve, with its well-equipped, well-led, and well-trained professional men and women, will be integral to the U.S. Marine Corps of the future. ●



LCpl Allan D. Donaire, a 20-year-old native of Linden, N.J., assigned to the Personnel Retrieval and Processing detachment at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, pauses to remember a fallen servicemember July 19, 2006. (Photo by Cpl Stephen Holt/USMC)